Title: Regarding Kerala High Court"s banning smoking in public places and prohibiting of the use of matchsticks for the purpose of lighting beedi.

SHRI A.P. ABDULLAKUTTY (CANNANORE): Respected Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the recent judgement of the Kerala High Court banning smoking in public places and also prohibiting the use of match sticks for the purpose of lighting beedi has created a serious problem in the State. There is a widespread unemployment among the beedi workers in the North Malabar region of Kerala, especially in my constituency, Cannanore. Manufacturing of beedi is a cottage industry, giving employment to thousands of workers. The bunk vendors are also thrown out of employment by the prohibition of sale of matchbox and beedi.

Yesterday, hundreds of beedi workers have taken a *jatha* to courts, protesting against the decision of the court. I request the Central Government to intervene in the matter and do justice to the beedi workers. Thank you.